

Creighton University School of Medicine

Medical Education Program Policies

POLICY: Attendance Policy and Absence Request Procedure

GOVERNING BODY: Educational Program Committee

APPROVAL DATE: 7/9/2019

REVISED DATE: 11/26/2019; 2/9/2021; 6/8/2021; 4/26/2022; 1/24/2023; 6/27/2023

LCME ACCREDITATION STANDARD REFERENCE: Element 12.4 Student Access to Health Care Services

PURPOSE

The policy defines the Medical Education Program's academic attendance expectations for students enrolled in the program. The document also defines the procedures students must complete to request an absence within the medical education program. Lastly, the policy defines the official holidays for the Medical Education Program.

DEFINITION

Attendance: Physical presence at the assigned location at the assigned time. Alternative forms of participation (e.g., Teams, Zoom, etc.) or convening at alternative locations are only permissible with prior approval by the appropriate course director.

POLICY

1. Attendance of Mandatory Activities

Regular attendance at all curricular activities is expected and considered a professional responsibility of medical students. Attendance at certain designated activities is

MANDATORY. These include:

- Orientation and general class meetings organized by the Office of Student Affairs, Office of Medical Education, or any other School of Medicine Department.
- Examinations and quizzes.
- Small group sessions including case-based learning and team-based learning sessions.
- Anatomy Laboratory Sessions
- Clinically related activities including, but not limited to, those related to Green Track and Clinical Skills Training in Components I and II, Grand Rounds presentations where patients are present, and Clinical Rotations in Components III and IV.
- All Gold Track academic activities including those in the Component III M3 Gold Track course.
- M4 Capstone Elective academic activities (e.g., lecture, simulations, laboratories, etc.)
- Activities at the Clinical Education & Simulation Center.
- Any other activity designated as mandatory.

2. Approved Absence from a Mandatory Activity (An Excused Absence)

2.1. Absence from a mandatory activity (also known as an excused absence) will be granted for:

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- 2.1.1. Illness, with a medical provider's excuse being necessary for absences of more than one day.
 - 2.1.2. Medical appointments for self or dependent with appropriate documentation confirming the medical appointment occurred.
 - 2.1.3. Required election work or jury duty.
 - 2.2. In general, absence from a mandatory activity will be granted for:
 - 2.2.1. The funeral of an immediate family member: parent, spouse, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, or step/in-law of the same degree.
 - 2.2.2. Presentation or official delegate status at a regional, national, or international medical conference or medical association meeting.
3. Absence from a Mandatory Activity Without Permission (Unexcused Absence)
 - 3.1. An unapproved absence from a mandatory activity (an Unexcused Absence):
 - will result in the submission of an Unexcused Absence form to the Office of Student Affairs and, if warranted, an Early Concern Notice to the Office of Student Affairs. Unexcused Absence forms and Early Concern Notices are placed in the student's academic file.
 - may result in failure of the course in which the unauthorized absence occurred as well as referral to the Advancement Committee for unprofessional behavior.
4. Completion of Missed Work Due to An Excused Absence
 - 4.1. Students in all components are responsible for ALL missed work regardless of the reason for the absence.
 - 4.2. Rescheduling of an examination within the pre-clerkship curriculum requires prior arrangements with the appropriate Component Director. Rescheduling of an examination within the clerkship curriculum requires prior arrangement with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or designee. Excessive requests will be denied.
5. Personal Day

Personal days can be utilized by students for absences for weddings, vacations, and so forth. Personal days cannot be utilized to miss exams, quizzes, or Clinical Skills Examinations.

 - 5.1. Personal Day Allotment Component I, II, and III Students:

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- Component I, II, and III students are allowed two (2) personal days during the academic year.

5.2. Personal Day Allotment for Component IV Students:

Component IV students are allowed up to one (1) personal day off from their academic activities for each four-week elective and no days off for each two-week elective.

Exceptions are made for:

- Interviewing Months: October, November, December, January
 - Students are allowed a total of five (5) days off from their academic activities for each four-week elective and a total of two (2) days off for each two-week elective to interview with residency programs during these months. Absences are approved for full days only.
- Capstone Course: Students are allowed up to two (2) personal days off.
- Students are allowed up to two days off to take the USMLE Step 2 CK.
- Students may not take more than five (5) days off, in total, for interviewing, Step 2 CK, personal days, or other activities during a four-week elective.

6. Conference Attendance

Students are allowed to attend regional, national, or international medical conferences or medical association meetings to present research and/or represent the School of Medicine as an official delegate. Students will receive the following time allotment for these activities.

6.1. Out of town conferences: three (3) days

6.2. Local conferences: one (1) day

6.3. Virtual conferences: one (1) day

6.3.1. Presentation of Research

Students are encouraged to present scholarly research at conferences and meetings. Students will be allowed one (1) presentation for each research project where they are the first presenting student author.

6.3.2. Official Delegate/Officer

Students are encouraged to represent the School of Medicine at conferences and meetings as an official delegate and/or officer of a major national medical or student medical association or organization. The Component Director will review the delegate responsibilities to determine approval of the student's attendance.

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7. Monitoring of Student Absence

A student who will be absent from a mandatory activity must adhere to the absence request procedure for the student's component. Absences requests are monitored by the Office of Student Affairs and kept in the student's academic file. If excessive absence makes it unfeasible to make-up mandatory course activities, a student may be asked to request a temporary withdrawal from the Advancement Committee.

8. Medical Education Official Holiday Schedule

- Memorial Day – University Holiday – Clinical Duties as Assigned for M3/M4 Students
- Juneteenth – University Holiday – Clinical Duties as Assigned for M3/M4 Students
- Independence Day – University Holiday – Clinical Duties as Assigned for M3/M4 Students
- Labor Day – University Holiday – Clinical Duties as Assigned for M3/M4 Students
- Thanksgiving – University Holiday
 - M1/M2 Students – Holiday begins at 5:00 pm the Friday before Thanksgiving Week and ends at 8:00 am the first Monday after Thanksgiving
 - M3/M4 Students – Holiday begins at 5:00 pm on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and duties resume as defined by our clinical partners on the first Monday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas and New Year's – University Holiday – Please refer to the appropriate academic calendar to determine observed dates for these holidays.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – University Holiday – Clinical Duties as Assigned for M3/M4 Students
- Good Friday (Easter Holiday) – No Classes or Clinical Duties for All Medical Students
 - M1/M2 – Holiday begins at 5:00 pm the Thursday before Good Friday. Classes resume at 5:00 pm on the first Monday after Good Friday
 - M3/M4 Student – Holiday begins at 5:00 pm the Thursday before Good Friday. Duties resume as defined by our clinical partners on the first Monday after Good Friday.

PROCEDURE

1. Absence Request

1.1. Component I and II:

Students are responsible for ALL missed work regardless of the reason for the absence. Absence without permission may result in failure of the block as well as referral to the

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Advancement Committee for unprofessional behavior.

1.1.1. Requesting An Excused Absence

To request an excused absence for one of the reasons listed in Policy Section 2 of this policy, students must complete an online Absence Request Form on the Class Bulletin Board in BlueLine. The form needs to be submitted no later than 14 calendar days before the requested leave date. In cases of personal or family emergencies, submit the form as soon as feasible. The Component Director will determine whether the absence can be excused and, if appropriate, assign an alternative learning experience based on the missed mandatory activity. If verification is requested, documentation will need to be submitted to the Office of Student Affairs.

1.1.1.1. Completion of Missed Mandatory Activities for an **Excused Absence**

1.1.1.1.1. Examinations and quizzes: Student will arrange an alternative time with the M1 or M2 Curriculum Coordinator.

1.1.1.1.2. Team Based Learning session:

1.1.1.1.2.1. TBL iRAT: Student will arrange an alternative time with the M1 or M2 Curriculum Coordinator to complete the iRAT.

1.1.1.1.2.2. CBL: Clinical Decision Making Questions: Student will be required to complete and submit the Clinical Decision Making Question within one (1) day of return from absence. If a student does not meet this requirement they will receive a score of zero (0) for the CBL clinical decision making questions.

1.1.1.1.3. Other activities: Arranged with the appropriate Component Director.

1.1.2. Requesting a Personal Day

Students must submit an Absence Request Form for a Personal Day no later than 7 days before the requested leave date.

1.1.2.1. Completion of Missed Mandatory Activities for a **Personal Day**

No **alternative** learning experience will be arranged for absences due to personal days. If the absence is from a Case/Team Based Learning session, the student will receive the following scores:

- iRAT: score is recorded as 0
- tRAT: team score is recorded
- CBL: score is recorded as 0

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1.1.3. Request to Attend a Conference or Meeting

M1/M2 students may attend conferences and/or meetings per Policy Section 6 of this policy. Students must follow the same procedure detailed in Procedure Section 1.1.1 of this policy, Requesting an Excused Absence. Students time allotment for the conference and/or meeting is detailed on Policy Section 6 of this policy and must be adhered to.

1.2 Component III:

Students are responsible for ALL missed work regardless of the reason for the absence. Absence without permission may result in failure of the clerkship or elective as well as referral to the Advancement Committee for unprofessional behavior.

1.2.1. Requesting An Excused Absence

To request an excused absence for one of the reasons listed in Policy Section 2 of this policy, students are required to:

- Complete an Absence Request Form, which is available on the Class Bulletin Board on Blueline.
- Submit the form to the appropriate Clerkship Coordinator no later than 14 calendar days before the requested leave date. In cases of personal or family emergencies, submit the form to the Clerkship Coordinator as soon as feasible.

Upon initial approval the request form will be submitted to the M3/M4 Component Director for final approval. The Component Director or designee will:

- Consult with the appropriate coordinator to verify that the student is eligible to take the requested time off.
- Notify the student of the request's approval or denial.
- Submit the Absence Request Form to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs for placement in the student's academic file.

A student must be notified by the Component Director of the request's approval **prior** to the absence.

1.2.1.1 Completion of Missed Mandatory Activities For An Excused Absence

All students are responsible for ALL missed work, regardless of the reason for the absence and must contact the Component Director upon the student's return.

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- 1.2.1.1.1 Clerkship/Selective Activities: The appropriate clerkship director, course director, or attending physician will determine the arrangements (assignment or alternative activity) that the student must complete to make up the missed activity.
- 1.2.1.1.2 Examinations and Quizzes: If an examination has been missed, the student will be expected to take a make-up exam at the earliest possible time following the student's return.

1.2.2. Personal Day:

Students must submit an Absence Request Form no later than 14 calendar days before the requested leave date. The requested personal day request must receive approval by the appropriate clerkship director and the M3/M4 Component Director. The student must receive approval notification from the M3/M4 Component Director prior to the absence in order to utilize the personal day. Clinical time off for approved personal day does not need to be made up.

Students **may not** utilize personal days when scheduled for call unless arrangements are made with the clerkship director to arrange for suitable call coverage so as to not make the absence an undue hardship to fellow students or to the department.

1.2.3. Request to Attend a Conference or Meeting:

1.2.3.1. Local Specialty Conference

M3 Students may attend a local specialty conference only at the invitation and approval of the Clerkship Director or Selective Director if the conference pertains directly to the subject matter of the currently enrolled clerkship or selective.

1.2.3.2. Regional or National Conference

Students may attend a regional, national, and/or international conference if the following prerequisites are met:

- Student must meet all requirements within Policy Section 2.2.2 of this policy.
- Receive approval for the absence from the appropriate Clerkship Director or Selective Director and the M3/M4 Component Director prior to attending the conference. Approval can be awarded by completing the process stated in Procedure 1.2.1. of this policy.

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1.3 Component IV:

Students are responsible for ALL missed work regardless of the reason for the absence. Absence without permission may result in failure of the elective as well as referral to the Advancement Committee for unprofessional behavior.

1.3.1 Requesting an excused absence

Students are required to complete the following steps to request an excused absence:

- Complete an Absence Request Form, which is available on Blueline.
- Submit the form to the Course Director no later than 14 calendar days before the requested leave date. In cases of personal or family emergencies, submit the form to the Course Director as soon as feasible.

Upon initial approval the Course Director will submit the request form to the M3/M4 Component Director for approval. The Component Director or designee will:

- Consult with the appropriate coordinator to ensure the student is eligible to take the requested time off.
- Notify the student of the request's approval or denial
- Submit the Absence Request Form to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs for placement in the student's academic file.

A student must be notified by the Component Director of the request's approval **prior** to the absence. Students are encouraged to use their interviewing month and non-clinical electives during the traditional interviewing months to have adequate time for interviewing.

1.3.2 Personal Day

Students are required to complete an Absence Request form no later than 14 calendar days before the requested personal day. The personal day request must gain approval of the course director and the Component Director, who must notify the student of the approval **prior** to the absence.

Students may not take personal days off for days scheduled for call unless arrangements are made with the course director to arrange for suitable call coverage so as to not make the absence an undue hardship to fellow students on the course or to the department.

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1.3.3 Request to Attend a Conference or Meeting

1.3.3.1 Local Specialty Conference

M4 Students may attend a local specialty conference only at the invitation and approval of the Clerkship Director or Selective Director if the conference pertains to the subject matter of the currently enrolled clerkship or selective.

1.3.3.2. Regional or National Conference

M4 Students may attend a regional, national, and/or international conference if the following prerequisites are met:

- Students must meet all requirements within the Policy Section 2.2.2. of this policy.
- Receive approval for absence from the appropriate Selective Director and the M3/M4 Component Director prior to attending the conference. Approval can be awarded by completing the process stated in Procedure Section 1.3.1. of this policy.

1.4 Absence from a Mandatory Activity Due to Needing to Access Health Care Services

In the case of a need to access health care services in which advance completion of a Student Absence Request Form is not practical, Component I and II students must email their Curriculum Coordinator and Component Director as soon as practical. In Components III and IV, the student must email their Curriculum Coordinator, the Clerkship Director (or attending physician for Component IV students), and M3/M4 Component Director as soon as practical.

A student who misses an activity due to a need to access health care services must follow the above-mentioned process for completing a Student Absence Request Form upon his or her return. If the absence is more than one day or if requested by the Component Director, the student must present a medical provider's note from the provider seeing the student for the health problem that verifies the student's absence. Failure to verify the absence may result in failure of the course or clerkship as well as referral to the Advancement Committee for unprofessional behavior.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students enrolled in the Medical Education Program.

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ADMINISTRATION AND INTERPRETATION

The Office of Student Affairs is responsible for the administration of this policy. Please forward questions to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

AMENDMENT

This policy may be amended by majority vote of the School of Medicine Educational Program Committee.